



City of Cincinnati

Date: October 15, 2003

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Cincinnati Fire Chaplain Reinstated

At today's City Council meeting, City Manager Valerie Lemmie announced a resolution to issues surrounding Fr. Mike Paraniuk's ministry in the fire department had been resolved and that he will continue to provide spiritual leadership to all Cincinnati firefighters.

Mayor Charlie Luken and Lemmie talked with Fire Chief Robert Wright, Cincinnati Fire Fighters Local 48 President Joe Diebold, and Fr. Mike Paraniuk to come to an understanding of Fr. Mike's continuing role with the fire department.

"In our discussions, we remained positive I am hopeful that we all can move forward in the context of fostering unity, brotherhood and sisterhood, and community in the department," said Lemmie.

In resuming his responsibilities, Paraniuk will continue to wear the patch and uniform of the Cincinnati Fire Fighters; focus his leadership on the private spiritual needs of the firefighters and their families, maintain the sanctity and confidentiality of his office, and will not stay overnight in the firehouses.

"I am glad we were able to come to a place of open dialogue and amicably resolve the differences we had so we can work on meeting the needs of the fire fighters that have come to light," said Fire Chief Robert Wright. Paraniuk will resume his duties immediately.

"Now is the time to look positively to the future to what the department can be," said Lemmie. "The Mayor and I are personally committed to working with the Chief, the Union, Cincinnati African American Fire Fighters Association (CAAF) and all fire fighters to address issues of inclusion and unity within the department."

Fire Chief Wright, Joe Diebold and Fr. Mike also addressed City Council this afternoon.

"I am pleased to be able to work under Chief Wright's direction and in concert with all fire fighters in the fire family to meet their individual and collective spiritual needs," said Paraniuk. "This is a time of healing as we move forward."

Joe Diebold, President of Cincinnati Fire Fighters Local 48, which is the state sanctioned representative body of the fire fighters said, "We want to move forward, serve as one unified community, and heal any wounds so we can make this fire department the best in the country."

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